



**U.S. Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Western District of Texas**

**Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**LOCAL WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO TAX SCHEME INVOLVING IDENTITY THEFT**

**United States Attorney Johnny Sutton** announced today that Margaret Snider Shalibi pled guilty before United States District Court Judge Xavier Rodriguez to charges of identity theft and assisting in the filing of false income tax returns.

The defendant worked for used automobile dealerships in San Antonio, Texas, and in that role she stole personal identifiable information from unsuspecting individuals and then used that information to assist in the preparation of a false tax return in that person's name. The government investigation revealed that the automobile dealerships she worked for purchased service agreements with Taxmax for Taxmax to prepare and file tax returns for the dealership customers who wished to use their tax refund as a down payment toward the purchase of an automobile from the dealership. These false tax returns reflected false employers, false wages and withholding, false dependents claims for Earned Income Credit (EIC), and repetitive use of employer and residential addresses. The taxpayers were not aware that the defendant prepared tax returns in their names and in fact many of the taxpayers whose identities she unlawfully used had been incarcerated at the same facilities during the same periods of time that she was also incarcerated. Additionally, many were still incarcerated when the false tax returns filed in their names were signed.

As part of the scheme, if the taxpayer was approved for a Refund Anticipation Loan (RAL), *Taxmax* would receive the RAL funds and in turn, would electronically transmit or physically mail a check for the funds directly to the dealership. The dealership was then responsible for providing the difference between the RAL funds and the auto down payment to the taxpayer. Once Taxmax funded the RAL, Snider Shalibi would convert the funds to her own use.

Sentencing has been scheduled for February 2009. This case was investigated by the Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation Division and is being prosecuted for the government by Assistant United States Attorney Thomas McHugh.

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